

We claim:

1 1. A method for providing communication control functionality to at
2 least one communication device associated with an enhanced network user over
3 a distributed feature communication network, the distributed feature
4 communication network comprising a plurality of feature boxes, each feature box
5 enabling a particular communication functionality, the distributed feature
6 communication network also comprising an operational database, said
7 operational database including data records accessible to the enhanced network
8 user for performing work related tasks, the method comprising:

9 creating an authentication feature box for receiving login information from
10 the at least one communication device associated with the enhanced network
11 user, said authentication feature box determining if the at least one
12 communication device will have access to communication control functions
13 residing in the distributed feature communication network; and

14 upon login, creating one or more application feature boxes, each
15 application feature box being capable of performing a particular communication
16 control functionality for the at least one communication device, said one or more
17 application feature boxes also being able to download data records from the
18 operational database and communicating the data records to the at least one
19 communication device.

1 2. The method according to claim 1 wherein access to the
2 communication control functions further comprises the step of the enhanced
3 network user being connected through signaling and media channels to other
4 feature boxes, and records in the operational database necessary for the other
5 feature boxes to function.

1 3. The method according to claim 1 wherein communication control
2 functionality includes processing of voice and data communications.

1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the communication control functionality
2 includes processing of multimedia communications.

1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein each communication control
2 functionality corresponds to the creation of one or more feature boxes in the
3 distributed feature communication network, said feature boxes invoking specific
4 communication features based on requests received from the at least one
5 communication device.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the communication control functionality
2 includes conferencing capabilities.

1 7. The method of claim 5 wherein the communication control functionality
2 includes transferring capabilities.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein said communication device is a
2 computer.

1 9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving an incoming call intended for the at least one communication
3 device associated with the enhanced network user; and
4 creating one or more feature boxes for connecting the incoming call to the
5 at least one communication device associated with the enhanced network user.

1 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a communication from the at least one communication device
3 requesting that the incoming call be placed on hold;
4 creating a feature box for placing the call on hold; and
5 transferring the incoming call to the on hold feature box.

1 11. The method of claim 9 further comprising the steps of:

2 receiving a communication from the at least one communication device
3 requesting that the incoming call be transferred to voice mail;
4 creating a feature box for receiving voice mail messages; and
5 transferring the incoming call to the voice mail feature box.

1 12. The method of claim 9 further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a communication from the at least one communication device
3 requesting that the incoming call be transferred to another communication device
4 not associated with the enhanced network user;
5 creating at least one feature box for transferring the incoming call;
6 transferring the incoming call to the communication device not associated
7 with the enhanced network user.

1 13. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
2 forwarding one or more data records from the operational database to the
3 at least one communication device associated with the enhanced network user,
4 said one or more data records containing information pertaining to the incoming
5 call.

1 14. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of:
2 forwarding a data record from the database to the at least one
3 communication device associated with the enhanced network user, said data
4 record containing customer record information relating to the customer
5 associated with the incoming call.

1 15. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of:
2 forwarding a data record from the database to the at least one communication
3 device associated with the enhanced network user, said data record containing
4 order forms to be completed by the enhanced network user.

1 16. The method of claim 1 wherein said distributed feature
2 communication network is a broadband network.

1 17. The method of claim 16 wherein said distributed feature
2 communication network is a cable network.

1 18. A method for processing communications to communication devices
2 logged onto a distributed feature network, the distributed feature network
3 comprising a plurality of feature boxes, each feature box enabling a particular
4 communication functionality, the distributed feature network also comprising an
5 operational database, said operational database including data records
6 accessible to the communication devices for performing work related tasks, said
7 communication devices being able to receive voice and data communications,
8 each said communication device being associated with a particular agent, each
9 agent logging in prior to having access to the distributed feature network, said
10 distributed feature network maintaining a list of logged in agents and associated
11 communication devices, said communications originating from one or more third
12 party devices, each third party device being identified by origination information,
13 the method comprising:

14 receiving a communication request to connect to a communication device
15 logged onto the distributed feature network;

16 determining the type of communication requested by the third party
17 device;

18 determining the availability of those communication devices able to
19 respond to the type of communication being requested by the third party device;

20 routing the communication to an available communication device able to
21 respond to the type of communication being requested;

22 forwarding to the available communication device information from the
23 operational database relating to the third party associated with the third party
24 device that originated the communication; and

25 creating feature boxes corresponding to the communication control
26 functionality required by the available communication device so the available
27 communication device is able to interact with the third party device.

1 19. The method according to claim 18 wherein said communication
2 request is a telephone number.

1 20. The method according to claim 19 wherein said communication
2 request is a URL address.

1 21. The method according to claim 18 wherein said step of determining
2 the availability of a communication device further comprises the steps of:
3 determining which communication devices are associated with agents that
4 are logged onto the distributed feature network;
5 determining which of the communication devices associated with logged in
6 agents are available to receive communications; and
7 forwarding the communication to an available communication device
8 associated with a logged in agent.

1 22. The method of claim 21 further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a communication from the available communication device
3 associated with a logged in agent requesting that the third party communication
4 be placed on hold;
5 creating a feature box for placing the call on hold; and
6 transferring the third party communication to the on hold feature box.

1 23. The method of claim 21 further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a communication from the available communication device
3 associated with a logged in agent requesting that the third party communication
4 be transferred to voice mail;
5 creating a feature box for receiving voice mail messages; and

1 27. The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of:
2 forwarding a data record from the database to the available communication
3 device associated with a logged in agent, said data record containing order
4 forms.